



FRIENDS OF STORETON WOODS



REGISTERED CHARITY No.1001472

<http://friendsofstorettonwoods.org.uk>
E-mail-committee@friendsofstorettonwoods.org.uk

CHAIR- KEN WHITTLE

WORKING WITH THE WOODLAND TRUST FOR THE BENEFIT OF STORETON WOODS

MINUTES OF THE 18TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF STORETON WOODS HELD TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2008 IN VICTORIA HALL BEBINGTON.

Present: The Chairman, 12 Committee members, Tim Kirwin (Woodland Trust), 25 members, 2 guests and the guest speaker, Mr. Peter Cunnington

Before the meeting started, the Chairman announced the death of Douglas Allender who had been a committee member during 1994. Condolences were sent to his widow and family.

1. **Apologies:** Received from Matt Adams, Rochelle Mclean, Mrs.M.E.Diver and Mrs. M. Pitney.

2. Minutes of 17th AGM dated 20/03/07 and Matters Arising.

2.1 Minutes were distributed to the meeting and had been available on the website. After a short period they were accepted as a true record following a proposal by Doreen Whiston and seconded by George Bowler. There were no matters arising from these minutes.

3. Chairman Report.

3.1 Ken reminded members that Newsleaf is the source for the news updates and items of interest and therefore his report would not repeat those items.
3.2 Workdays are well attended with an increase in volunteers over the past year and we would welcome more in helping out.
3.3 Mention was made about the tree planting occasion that occurred in late November and at present all 7 trees are surviving.
3.4 Ken gave thanks to the efforts of the committee over the past year and also to David Casement for his support to the FOSW through the many talks given to the community and the donations raised as a result of them which are passed onto the FOSW.

4. Treasurer Report.

4.1 Peter explained the summary of the 2007 accounts which were attached to the minutes. Receipts were £9,410.75; expenditure was £3,366.39 therefore showing a surplus of £6,044.36 for the year.
4.2 We have a healthy balance in the total account held of £59,167.27
4.3 Our income had increased by over £1000 in subscriptions and donations on the 2006 figures mainly due to some members paying in advance for 2009. Gift aid rebate was down to £469.21 and Peter explained that the HMR&C required changes made to the reporting system and therefore only 9 months could be claimed during 2007.
4.4 Our main expenditure last year was £ 2,023.90 on Woodland Management. This involved replacing a gate on Rest Hill Road due to vandalism, general tree safety work and maintenance during the year plus boundary work.
4.5 Peter commented on the committee's decision to introduce the eco-friendly shopping bags for sale in time for Christmas and how successful they are.
4.6 Following the treasurers report a member raised the question as to the large reserve of money that is accumulating over the years and should we be reducing it. Peter passed this over to the Chairman to answer. Ken responded by stating that it is still the FOSW intention to acquire the next wood on the ridge from the Leverhulme Estates and we have had dialogue with them over the past couple of years, however these cannot be rushed through. He went onto say that the committee are monitoring the situation over funding and reserves policy. Tim Kirwin (Woodland Trust) also mentioned that discussions have been held with the committee over the situation.

5. Election to the Committee.

5.1 Eric Forsyth, Kitty Stower, George Nelson, Dennis Clarke and Matt Adams were re-elected 'en bloc' after being proposed by Gordon Plumb and seconded by John Lee.
5.2 Jean Whittle was confirmed, on a show of hands, as a committee member.
5.3 There were no further nominations for the remaining vacancy on the committee.
5.4 Ken Whittle announced that he was stepping down by arrangement with the committee, as Chairman of the FOSW, after serving in the role since 2000 but will remain a committee member. He requested the members to welcome Eric Forsyth as the new Chairman. At this point, Eric proceeded to complete the remaining agenda items.

6. The Woodland Trust Report.

6.1 Tim stated that 2007 had been a quiet year as far as the Woodland Trust was concerned with very little major projects being carried out in the area.

6.2 Following on from the above, Storeton Woods activity included the purchase and planting of some Standard trees along with those that some individual FOSW members had contributed towards. These standards were to replace a number of fallen trees during recent storms.

6.3. Plans for 2008 include continuing tree safety works as a result of this years storms that we have experienced. As a result of a tree falling onto the Mount Road wall in February, some damage was caused to the stone work. This will be repaired during the next few weeks. Other items on the agenda include the Wintergreen, which will require re- assessing for removal.

6.4 Concluding his report, Tim thanked the committee as a whole for their efforts over 2007 stating that the duties of the Woodland Trust Officer was made a lot easier to fulfil.

Tim welcomed Eric as new Chairman and ended by thanking Ken as the past Chairman for his hard work and effort over that past 8 years. As a mark of gratitude from the Woodland Trust, Tim presented Ken with a small presentation.

6.5 Following Tim's report, a member asked what plans were in place for the newly planted trees if they were vandalised etc. Tim replied that they will be replaced.

7. Constitution Changes.

7.1 Proposal by the committee –Rule 7. "AGM shall be held either in March or April at such a time as the Committee shall appoint". Following an explanation as to the reason behind the change, the motion was carried on a show of hands with no dissenters. This will take effect from 2009.

8. Independent Examiner Ratification.

8.1 Peter asked the members for approval to re-appoint Mr. Alan White as the Independent Examiner of the FOSW accounts for 2008. It was proposed by Gordon Plumb, seconded by George Bowler and carried on a show of hands.

9. Annual Subscription.

9.1 Based on the healthy financial account, the management committee had decided to maintain the annual subscription at £3 per person. Members ratified this decision on a show of hands.

10. Correspondence Received.

10.1 There was no correspondence for discussion.

11. Any Other Business.

11.1 The Secretary on behalf of the web master, Matt Adams, read out a brief website report for 2007. The report stated that the site had continued to grow with additional items being added to the pages. It also provided regular updates on events, workdays etc. The popularity of the site is measured in terms that many other sites including local government, local societies, are linking into us. The report concluded with the news that plans are being proposed to re-develop the site making it even easier to access it and navigate round it.

11.2 In tribute to the efforts of Edith Forsyth who arranges the refreshments on workdays and events such as the AGM, the past Chairman, Ken Whittle, presented Edith, on behalf of the committee and FOSW members, with a bouquet of flowers.

The AGM came to a close at 20.05hrs with an invitation to partake in refreshments followed by a presentation by our guest speaker Peter Cunnington.

Due to a technical malfunction of the equipment during the refreshment break, the advertised subject on climate change was unable to be shown. Peter Cunnington, (former curator of Ness Botanical Gardens) was able to change the style of his talk to maintain the subject, but in a more relaxed style which met with the audience approval. His discussion ranged from the type of plants grown in this country and abroad which over the years have adapted to weather changes, to, is there a real climate change compared to the winters of 1947, 1962 /3 and summers such as 1976 etc?

With the participation of the members present the evening turned from what could have been a disaster into a success.